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IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY FOR THE FIRST REGIONAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (1997-2001)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The first regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Asia and the Pacific (1997-2001) was approved by the Executive Board at its second regular session 1997. The RCF focuses on three main programme areas: (a) human development and equity, (b) environment and natural resource management, and (c) enabling economic environments and public policy.

2. In its decision 97/9 of 14 March 1997, the Executive Board requested that the Administrator present for the Board's consideration and approval an implementation strategy paper for each regional cooperation programme. The present document responds to that request, indicating how the objectives stated in the first RCF for Asia and the Pacific will be achieved.

I. LESSONS OF PAST COOPERATION

3. The Office of Strategic Planning and Evaluation (OESP) 1996 evaluation, entitled Global, Interregional and Regional Programmes: An Evaluation of Impact, and the 1995 report of the mid-term review of the fifth regional programme for Asia and the Pacific had a number of common recommendations that influenced the design and implementation of the first RCF. In addition, the RCF incorporates lessons learned from formal reviews and evaluations of past activities, as well as new approaches developed through discussions with UNDP country offices and Governments. The lessons learned from the 11 formal regional programme evaluations scheduled to be carried out by the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) in 1997 will also be integrated into the ongoing design and implementation of the RCF.

4. In summary, the recommendations of the OESP evaluation and the mid-term review of the fifth regional programme can be grouped under the following headings:

(a) Focus. Greater focus should be achieved in programmes through careful and sustained preparatory work, with a clear definition of problems and an emphasis on problem-solving. Project design should have a greater focus on cross-cutting issues such as gender, governance and science and technology. Overall, the number of intercountry projects should be reduced;

(b) Ownership. Building ownership among Governments, programme participants, all other partners and UNDP country offices requires an inclusive and participatory approach in project design and in structuring implementation strategies. Greater involvement of resident representatives with further decentralization to country offices will enhance linkages to national development objectives. Countries of the region wish to see the concept of sustainable human development (SHD) broadly defined to include the critical need for economic growth while attaching high priority to social, environmental and equity issues; programmes responding to this felt need will enhance ownership. More extensive use of preparatory assistance for programme formulation will be critical to achieving goals in participation, baseline information collection and inclusion of cross-cutting issues;

(c) Capacity-building of regional and subregional institutions. Capacity development would be enhanced by including a realistic strategy in each project and/or programme document; incorporating a demonstration and learning approach into the design of a project or programme; demonstrating alternative methods to address core SHD priorities; and using regional and national resources and institutions more extensively in project preparation and implementation;

(d) Learning approaches. Regional programmes should use a demonstration and learning approach in support of achievement of SHD-related objectives. A service-oriented approach should be avoided in regional programmes, which should have a commitment to learning within and across projects. Learning should also be part of new project design and facilitate the sharing of information among development actors and donors;

(e) Links to national programmes and to global programmes. At the design stage of projects, it must be considered how to establish appropriate linkages among the different project levels (global, regional, national and local), as well as between regional and subregional and among subregional projects. Cooperation between the regional bureaux and specialist divisions at headquarters should be expanded to optimize the use of in-house expertise;

(f) Collaboration with the United Nations system, regional commissions, and others. Already established arrangements for close working relationships with the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) need to be further strengthened.

II. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY AND ARRANGEMENTS

A. Common elements in the design and implementation of the components of the regional programme

5. All RCF programmes for Asia and the Pacific are based on one or more of the following regional criteria: sharing and/or pooling resources (including intellectual and natural resources); addressing trans-boundary issues; addressing a common need or common problem; and developing or promoting agreed upon regional regimes, norms or policies. By advocating and demonstrating new and innovative development technology, practices and concepts as demanded by the countries of the region, regional programmes play a role in providing leadership as well as a neutral mechanism through which vastly different or similar countries may collaborate to achieve national development goals.

6. It is evident that the promotion of intercountry cooperation and the creation of harmonious political space and productive environments for socio-economic development are areas in which the mandate of the United Nations and UNDP is beyond dispute. As a learning organization with informed hindsight, an SHD-promoting organization with forward-looking vision, and a global development organization with capacities to harmonize international, regional, and national development efforts through its regional programmes, UNDP is able to provide a neutral environment for capacity development of regional institutions, build networks and partnerships, and facilitate regional and subregional integration and cooperation.

7. The overarching strategy for implementation of the component programmes of the first RCF for Asia and the Pacific is built around a commitment to the five key areas listed below:

(a) Focus. The formulation and development of the main programme areas were based on intensive consultations with Governments, United Nations agencies, subregional institutions, non-governmental and civil society-based organizations, and other development partners in the region. As a result of these consultations, RCF programme areas are now more targeted, both geographically, on the subregional level, and programmatically, under three thematic areas. Experience from past programmes shows that, generally, programmes are most effective when implemented among a small number of countries or in subregional groupings. Thus, more resources are now devoted to subregional programmes than ever before. The programmes grouped under the three thematic areas are more integrated, and fewer in number, reduced from over 350 projects in the fourth regional programme to about 15 projects in the current RCF. Activities in the various programmes will frequently overlap to provide integrated, innovative responses to SHD issues. Cross-cutting issues such as gender, HIV/AIDS, environment, poverty and governance will continue to be addressed, not only through individual programmes, but also as themes that permeate all programmes;

(b) Ownership. Building ownership will begin with the early stages of programme and project identification and design and continue throughout the implementation and evaluation of the programmes, including through consultations with all potential partner institutions and organizations, as well as donor partners. A process of participatory and interactive problem definition and resolution will be promoted. Participating partners will be key agents in all aspects of decision-making, including the development of work plans. Ongoing involvement of the UNDP country offices will facilitate linkages and the anchoring of issues in national development programmes and dialogues. In order to ground programmes in nationally, subregionally and regionally identified development areas, additional emphasis has been placed on the participatory engagement of regional actors and extensive time allocation to RCF preparatory assistance phases to develop programme objectives, as reflected in several of the programmes described in section B below;

(c) Capacity-building. Capacity-building will be achieved through a wide range of methodologies and approaches. Those to be applied across all programmes in the RCF ensure the participatory inclusion of all stakeholders. National and regional capacities will be used in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes, thus building capacity through active involvement. Capacities for active involvement in programmes will be identified during the process of building partnerships. When required, regional capacities will be supplemented by subcontracting arrangements through the technical cooperation among developing countries (TCDC) modality, twinning arrangements, or other appropriate mechanisms. The RBAP region pioneered the concept of the subregional resource facility (SURF) during the fifth regional programme. Under the first RCF, SURFs will support all regional and subregional programmes by enhancing links among partners in these programmes, providing information on expertise in the region and supporting management arrangements;

(d) Learning approaches. Information about programme activities will be continuously shared and readily available to all partners and new information will be integrated into programme activities. Each of the major programmes will have an Internet web site, which will allow programme partners to access updated information about completed and planned programme activities. The web site will also serve as an instrument for monitoring impact and results, and will provide a framework to define actions that should be taken in monitoring and evaluation. The sites will also allow for ongoing interactions with all concerned resident representatives, Governments, and other programme partners, through built-in and secured electronic mail components, to ensure that all partners will be involved in monitoring and evaluation. Through such a participatory approach, the knowledge gained through intercountry cooperation will flow easily into national approaches by the participants themselves;

(e) Links to national programmes and to global programmes. Linkages to national programmes will be strengthened by involving the key actors at the country level in the actual planning and implementation of regional programmes. The specific issues and approaches will be defined by the national actors, in line with national development priorities and in areas where the intercountry collaboration is an important or the only means to achieve the national development goals. Regional programmes are being designed in close cooperation with the managers of global programmes and are linking the learning approaches of global programmes to operational implementation and pilot-testing undertaken at the regional level;

(f) Collaboration with the United Nations system, regional commissions and others. Expertise from specialized United Nations agencies will be called upon for specific elements or full programme implementation. New forms of collaboration are taking shape with many agencies and with ESCAP. Through its Bangkok country office, UNDP is participating in the Regional Inter-agency Coordination for Asia and Pacific (RICAP) mechanism, established and led by ESCAP. Regional programme experts participate in several RICAP working groups. In other regional programmes, collaboration with agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and others, is a prominent feature.

B. Implementation strategies for each thematic area of the regional programme

1. Human development and equity

8. The main objective in this thematic area is to assist countries to define new and strengthen existing approaches and modalities, permitting them to minimize existing and emerging disparities in capacities and livelihoods.

National Human Development Report Programme (NHDR)

Objectives and implementation strategy

9. The primary objective of the programme is to develop human development benchmarks, indicators and analytical tools for monitoring human development and

poverty in each participating country of the region. It also supports the formulation and development of more people-centred national policies and strategies, including gender-sensitive policies, and promotes public debate on these issues. Through the programme, these objectives will be implemented by providing seed money from the regional programme to support the preparation of high-quality reports through a consultative process that builds technical capacity, involving peer review, creates a human development network in each country, and cross-fertilizes ideas and capacities among countries. Each report will be prepared by a national team of experts with advisory international services, as appropriate. Regional institutions such as the Statistical Institute of Asia and the Pacific and ESCAP will be involved in developing technical capacity and promoting policy dialogue. In addition, the programme will ultimately establish a common standard and mechanism for monitoring human development and poverty in the region, based on the global Human Development Report.

Expected results and success criteria

10. The programme is expected to demonstrate results in increased national and international policy dialogue on issues of human development and public action for human development, including changes in policy, shifts in development assistance, increased research and greater participation of civil society. The fundamental human development data tools generated by national human development reports will help to improve the quality of national debates, as well as the targeting and analysis of national poverty eradication development planning and policy. Indicators of success will include the publication of 20 high-quality national human development reports, the establishment of systems and networks that regularly collect human development indicators and provide the basis for monitoring human development, and the setting up of human development networks spanning civil society and Government.

South Asian Poverty Alleviation Programme (SAPAP)

Objectives and implementation strategy

11. The objective of the programme is to support the efforts of Governments in South Asia to achieve specific commitments made by the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Heads of State in 1993 to eradicate poverty. The programme focuses on three elements of the SAARC strategy: social mobilization, poverty monitoring, and the formulation of pro-poor policies. Extensive demonstration of grass-roots activities adapted to national social and economic conditions will provide the basis for integrating social mobilization as a strategy for national level poverty alleviation. The preparation of an annual report on poverty in South Asia as well as national reports on the subject by a network of experts and institutions in the region will provide the basis for monitoring the incidence and dimensions of poverty, along with the effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes in each country. Intercountry collaboration on common policy issues such as the evaluation of poverty programmes, resource mobilization for poverty alleviation, and the impact of economic reform will be facilitated through the creation of regional platforms and networks. Regional ownership of the programme is enhanced by the

involvement of the SAARC secretariat and institutions and experts from the region.

Expected results and success criteria

12. The programme will contribute to the greater effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes and the establishment of monitoring systems by promoting the use of standardized and regionally appropriate indicators that can be used by the public at large as well as by policy makers. Success indicators will be measured by the reduction of the incidence of poverty in programme areas; the upscaling and mainstreaming of social mobilization approaches from the pilot programme areas; the regular publication of the reports on poverty and the establishment of common standards and mechanisms to be used as an instrument for inter- and intracountry comparison; and more pro-poor policy changes.

Urban Governance Programme

Objectives and implementation strategy

13. Based on recent evaluation findings from the previous phase of the programme (Urban Management Programme for Asia and the Pacific (UMPAP)), the outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and other lessons from a governance-focused, global mayors' conference, this programme will be an integral part of a regional partnership to alleviate urban poverty. The programme aims to facilitate informed policy decisions through the grass-roots and municipal-level networks and mechanisms developed under UMPAP. Programme activities will be complemented by the UNDP global programme on urban management and Habitat II commitments at the country level and cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and ESCAP in design and implementation. Because the involvement of regional institutions within UMPAP (including non-governmental umbrella organizations) proved crucial in sustaining the effects of the programme's initiatives, this new phase will build regional ownership, sustainability and impact by anchoring activities within a select number of regionally based organizations and institutions.

Expected results and success criteria

14. It is envisaged that the impact of the programme will be manifested in better informed policy decisions by local and national authorities in their urban planning and management. Success will be measured by the increased involvement of civil society and its organizations towards more locally representative pro-poor policy decisions, as well as a more holistic and people-centred approach to urban planning within participating countries.

Gender programme

Objectives and implementation strategy

15. This programme supports Governments in their efforts to implement the Beijing Platform of Action by: (a) making unpaid and undocumented work visible to policy makers and the public at large, so that public policy can be

responsive to actual needs and priorities of people engaged in unremunerated work; (b) facilitating the application of modern science and technology to promote gender equality and poverty alleviation; (c) promoting appropriate legal frameworks and women's participation in decision-making at all levels of polity; and (d) supporting the mainstreaming of gender in programmes and policies through capacity development. The programme strategy is to bring together policy makers and experts to identify key policy issues; support and establish resource groups of experts in the region in each of these key policy areas; undertake pilot and demonstration activities, document and share the results through electronic and other means across a wide spectrum of partners; and carry out intercountry training to share best practices. Thus programme activities will build on existing strengths and capacities in the region, helping to focus them on resolving critical, cutting-edge issues of gender equality. The preparatory assistance phase of this programme is well under way. Science and technology and unpaid work programme initiatives will be linked to United Nations Development Fund for Women activities.

Expected results and success criteria

16. The development of methodologies for measuring and valuing paid and unpaid work will contribute to the establishment of international standards and the incorporation of these concerns in public policy. The programme will also result in the upscaling and replication of modalities for using advanced science and technology for income-generation and the economic empowerment of poor women. Gender-sensitized legal frameworks, systems of political participation and the development of programmes and strategies will reflect the principles of gender equality promoted by this programme. Success will be measured by, among other things, the use of these methodologies and criteria in reformulated policies.

HIV and development in Asia and the Pacific

Objectives and implementation strategy

17. The objective of programming in this area is to increase understanding of the socio-economic determinants of the HIV epidemic at a policy level, among Governments, and in the private sector and civil society, resulting in policies and programmes to promote an improved and effective response to the epidemic. An integrated programme will operate in and across the Asian and Pacific subregions to address common subregional issues, such as migration, drug use, or the trafficking of women and children for sex. National actors will identify issues and design and implement development work that will address the implications of the epidemic and improve practice at the country level. At the regional level, in support of subregional and national actions, the programme will explore innovative approaches to the interconnected issues of governance, gender and poverty and will advance the application of the human development index (pioneered by the earlier phase of the regional programme) to incorporate an understanding of the impact of the epidemic. Much of this work will be carried out through joint financing and collaboration with the UNDP HIV/AIDS and Development Programme and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) as joint programming is undertaken. In all cases, relevant regional programmes will provide added value to countries through the improved understanding of the linkages among and between the issues and programmes. The

programme will make extensive use of information materials and the Internet to facilitate partner participation.

Expected results and success criteria

18. By the end of the programme, intercountry cooperation should be evident and should lead to sustainable relationships between cooperating organizations. Partnerships between civil society and Governments will be active; new understandings of the relationships between the response to the epidemic and national development strategies will lead to clear policy and programme change; and intercountry applied research will influence design of responses. Monitoring and evaluation will be based on indications of sustainable relationships between the various actors; changes in policies in accordance with options developed under the programme; and the integration of the implications of the impact of HIV/AIDS on development into development programmes in many sectors.

2. Environment and natural resource management

19. The objective in this thematic area is to facilitate transboundary cooperation in the management of water, air and other shared environmental resources.

Mekong programme

Objectives and implementation strategy

20. The objective of the programme is to assist the component parts of the Mekong River Commission to design and implement a sustainable development strategy, drawing on the 1995 agreements of the riparian countries. Assistance to the Secretariat, the National Mekong Committees, the Commission and the Joint Committee will involve capacity development as well as direct high-level technical advisory services. UNDP will also help the Mekong River Commission to develop the Donor Consultative Group mechanism into a forum for policy dialogue and to manage a multi-donor trust fund. Key activities will involve the provision of senior technical advisers in specific areas on short notice to provide additional inputs and reviews of technical documents for the Secretariat, the Commission and the National Committees. Capacity development through study tours, workshops and joint work plan development will contribute to the effectiveness of the national committees. Assistance to organize and manage the design of an effective strategy for the implementation of the Agreements will be delivered through consultant services, work planning sessions, peer review and senior advisory mechanisms, including public discussion and feedback, the involvement of inhabitants of the Mekong watershed and organizations of civil society. In addition, links with the environmental management concerns of individual participating countries will be further strengthened along with those among the National Committees. Additional areas of environmental management to be supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) will also be identified. The preparatory assistance phase for this programme is currently being undertaken.

Expected results and success criteria

21. Support from UNDP is expected to improve capacity to conceptualize a strategic vision and put in place the operational mechanisms to achieve it. This will include substantive dialogue with key donor partners around a strategy document and, later, a fully developed and approved basin development plan. Monitoring and evaluation will be based on capacity development indicators as well as verification of progress towards the actual design and implementation of a sustainable development strategy and the level to which that strategy reflects the concerns of the population of the basin. In addition, approval and implementation of environmental project(s) supported by GEF, especially in wetlands biodiversity, will be a critical indicator of success.

North-east Asia Regional Cooperation Programme (NEARCP)

Objectives and implementation strategy

22. North-east Asian countries have identified specific components of this programme for formulation. The components will address common environmentally related development concerns in the subregion, such as sustainable agriculture and food security, poverty alleviation, sustainable energy and pollution control. NEARCP will be implemented in collaboration with relevant government agencies, national and regional institutions.

Expected results and success criteria

23. National priorities and programmes of action comprise the starting point of NEARCP. Through such cooperation, NEARCP will help to build food security through the continuation of the North-east Asia Agricultural Cooperation Programme, as well as the Integrated Pesticide Management Project, which will focus on environmentally sensitive and improved pesticide management practices. Gender and development projects are being formulated to promote science and technology to benefit women. The coal combustion and atmospheric pollution project will facilitate the exchange of information, technology and experience. At the end of the programme, there should be greater subregional integration and cooperation based on sustainable intercountry mechanisms.

3. Enabling economic frameworks and public policy

24. The goal in this thematic area is to assist countries to design and implement policies and practices that will enable them to take advantage of changing economic and social conditions.

Support to the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Objectives and implementation strategy

25. Although the ASEAN subregional programme is still under preparation, it is envisioned that the main objectives will be to support the process of integrating an expanded ASEAN by building the capability of new members to accede to economic agreements, such as the ASEAN Free Trade Area, and contribute

to economic collaboration within ASEAN. The programme also aims to assist ASEAN countries in addressing the economic and social disparities that coincide with rapid economic growth and globalization, by promoting good governance and enhancing participation of civil society for sustainable and equitable economic development. Strengthened intra-ASEAN TCDC is envisaged as a useful mechanism for achieving these goals. The comparative advantages of UNDP as a neutral, global, intergovernmental dialogue partner of ASEAN has enabled it to assist ASEAN in formulating policy guidelines and recommendations. Through its network of field offices in ASEAN member countries, UNDP has worked closely with both national Governments and the ASEAN Committee and Secretariat, thus ascertaining the potential for linkages between national and regional levels.

Expected results and success criteria

26. It is expected that the programme will facilitate the successful integration of new members into the ASEAN framework so that they can begin to derive full benefits from membership. In addition, closer harmonization in the areas of trade and investment and completion of an on-line electronic communications and information exchange system are envisaged.

Support to the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO)

Objectives and implementation strategy

27. In collaboration with the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, the objective of this interregional programme is to support and facilitate subregional cooperation among the 10 member States of ECO (i.e., Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). ECO member States have agreed on the following strategy: strengthening the capacity of the ECO Secretariat, and supporting ECO countries in achieving increased trade efficiency in selected areas in order to assist countries in attaining their goal of more efficient economic cooperation within and outside the region. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development will have a role in facilitating this second component of the strategy. Both the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development components are currently undergoing a preparatory assistance phase.

Expected results and success criteria

28. As a result of the capacity-building component of the programme, the ECO Secretariat will be proactive rather than merely responsive in enhancing cooperation among member States. It will also be a window for ECO Secretariat dialogue and cooperation with non-member countries, regional institutions and international organizations. With regard to support to trade efficiency, a demonstration and implementation support base will be established for improved customs and transport systems. This will serve the demand of member States to harmonize these systems and foster greater cooperation in this region.

South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Trade and Equity

Objectives and implementation strategy

29. This programme seeks to develop policy options that will maximize the benefits of trade to the poor within SAARC countries, as these countries expand intraregional trade and move from the South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement to a South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA). The programme strategy is to provide, through advisory services, substantive support to the SAARC Secretariat on trade related issues; to develop a network of research and policy institutions in the region to conduct proactive research on issues of poverty reduction, gender equality and trade potential; and to assist SAARC Governments in learning from economic cooperation arrangements in other regions, including South-east Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean, through study tours, advisory services, and other TCDC mechanisms. The activities of the programme will also involve the private sector and other non-governmental partners in the region.

Expected results and success criteria

30. The programme will provide the basis for using trade and regional cooperation as a modality to reduce poverty and generate income for low-income groups in these countries. By contributing to greater economic cooperation it will promote greater regional stability and human security. Success will be measured by, among other things, the implementation of SAFTA with the incorporation of explicit poverty-reduction criteria in trading arrangements.

Tumen River Area Development Programme (TRADP)

Objectives and implementation strategy

31. TRADP fosters collaboration among China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, Mongolia and the Republic of Korea. It is the only continuing mechanism comprising a Commission and a Committee, with a Secretariat in Beijing that promotes a development dialogue among these countries in the interest of raising the standards of living of resident populations. TRADP, a high priority programme for the participating countries, will concentrate on investment promotion fora, the harmonization of trade regimes, the reduction of customs and other cross-border impediments and the exchange of information, all in a people-centred and sustainable manner. TRADP has already been instrumental in creating the Ranjin-Sonbong free trade and investment area within the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and is helping to support other investment promotion fora. TRADP promotes the harmonization of trade regimes, reduces cross-border trade and immigration impediments, enhances the exchange of information on trade and investment opportunities and provides training in trade and investment promotion and resource mobilization. Under the auspices of TRADP the countries involved have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on the Environment.

Expected results and success criteria

32. In its new phase, TRADP will help to create and support national coordination bodies in each participating country. It will continue to support investment promotion, facilitate the expansion of infrastructure, encourage trade and identify additional areas of environmental management to be supported by GEF. Success will be measured by the number of additional jobs and improved livelihoods generated by new investments, increased trade and development of infrastructure, and the cooperative mechanisms established and strengthened to ensure sustainability and promote peaceful and productive development among the member States.

South Pacific Subregional Programme

Objectives and implementation strategy

33. In response to the lessons of the subregional programmes of the fourth and fifth cycles, which revealed the need for greater subregional focus, this programme concentrates on four main thematic programme components: (a) human resource development, by providing support for basic education, vocational training, and functional literacy training, targeting the specific needs of the island countries; (b) environment and natural resources, by providing support for tourism, forestry, fisheries, agriculture, and disaster management; (c) private sector development, by providing support for the development of legislation and policies, markets, private sector partnerships with Governments, and access to economic resources; and (d) development management, by providing support for the development of employment policies, the implementation of employment strategies and budgetary systems, and the monitoring of national and international resources. All four components revolve around the core theme of job creation and sustainable livelihoods.

Expected results and success criteria

34. The subregional programme as a whole will help Pacific Island countries to follow up on their national objectives to develop their private sectors and strengthen Government/private sector partnerships; follow up on World Summit for Social Development commitments on employment creation, and coordinate with the sustainable livelihood component of the UNDP global Poverty Programme. The preparatory assistance phase, which commenced recently, will assess and determine potential linkages between country and subregional programmes, the linkages between the four subprogrammes, mechanisms for the dissemination of demonstrated experience and lessons, and the intended impact, through benchmarks for each of the four subprogrammes, as well as common benchmarks for the subregional programme.

Asia Pacific Development Information Programme (APDIP)

Objectives and implementation strategy

35. The programme has three main goals: (a) to harness information and communication technologies (ICTs) for networking and development facilitation in the programme countries; (b) to support existing and future ICT initiatives in

the region, including the UNDP Sustainable Development Networking Programme; and (c) to develop a methodology for the application of Internet open standards to improve information management and communication, to be disseminated to all 24 RBAP programme countries. The unique advantage of UNDP in this area derives from its extensive field presence in the region, its role as a trusted and objective provider of information and advice and coordinator of United Nations system programmes, its widespread contacts with governmental and non-governmental entities, and its growing body of technical expertise in country offices. Sustainability will be enhanced by training local staff to maintain ICT facilities and by the commercial viability of the services provided.

Expected results and success criteria

36. Development information and communication services will be provided to all Governments and other development partners in the region that have requested support, so that programme assistance is firmly grounded in country and regional ownership. APDIP will result in expanded access to information and data on SHD themes for large numbers, by linking programme country Governments and development partners to the global electronic information infrastructure, thus permitting access to a vast array of development information and facilitating their communication with all parts of the world. APDIP will be at the leading edge of the knowledge revolution in the region, making a direct contribution to the educational, health, and livelihood objectives of SHD as well as directly enhancing democracy and local governance. Its success will be measured by the numbers of those gaining access to new sources of information and knowledge as a direct result of the programme, and the tangible benefits which flow from such access.

Governance for sustainable growth and equity

Objectives and implementation strategy

37. The objective is to facilitate and influence national actions in areas of governance through the cooperative investigation of key issues and the creation of useful mechanisms for learning and sharing lessons. Implementation will focus in two areas of intervention: (a) the dissemination of information on best practices in government reforms from throughout the region, the creation of a network of parliamentarians, the investigation of solutions and approaches to issues of corruption, and the development of an enhanced understanding of application of regionally defined values to sound governance; and (b) the creation of new understandings of the ways that the core SHD areas interface and interact with governance and will be implemented collaboratively with the regional programmes in the areas of HIV/AIDS, gender, and poverty. The use of national capacities in Governments, academia, civil society and the private sector to undertake pilot testing, organize workshops, develop personal and electronic networks, identify and analyse current practices and give guidance to the work plans of the programme will be key approaches in implementation.

Expected results and success criteria

38. Work at the intercountry level is expected to result in new understandings of sound governance, and its linkages to poverty eradication and economic growth for achieving national SHD goals. The extent to which policy changes take place, more informed parliamentary action result, best practices are applied at the country level and new information about governance and development is used in national human development policies will be important indicators of success.

III. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

39. Programme performance will be measured and monitored primarily through the programme work plans. The workplan of each regional programme will include a set of practical programme performance indicators, as established by the programme formulation team. The PPRR will then set a timetable for the periodic review of this plan, including at tripartite reviews. The Principal Project Resident Representative (PPRR) will be responsible for ensuring that regional programme objectives are realized within the given time-frame and budget provided.

40. For the most part, programme impact will be measured and monitored by the collection of baseline data and through participant responses to surveys. Regional programmes, where relevant, must foresee the need for baseline surveys, and budget for them accordingly. In order to study impact, changes in baseline data over time will be recorded by the relevant regional programme as part of their half-yearly progress reports to the PPRR and RBAP. Similarly, regular feedback from participants on the added value of the programme will be recorded through informal and formal stakeholder consultations.

41. The PPRR will ensure that each programme coordinator creates an electronic monitoring environment for each regional programme, using an appropriate reporting format devised in consultation with the PPRR and RBAP, within the RBAP Intranet environment. Each regional programme will have an effective information-sharing and learning strategy. Programme coordinators will be responsible for establishing and operating this system.

42. At the national level, an appropriate country-level mechanism will be established to obtain feedback from all partners in the country on programme performance and impact achieved. This may evolve out of the country consultation mechanism carried out as part of the RCF formulation process. Each participating resident representative will lead the process.

43. Annual tripartite reviews will be held for each regional programme, based on an agreed to schedule between involved parties. The annual review will be chaired by the host Government, or co-chaired by the host Government and the PPRR. The six-monthly progress reports, budget and work plan for the past period will be reviewed in detail and achievements will be measured against the performance indicators provided. The work plan and budget for the next period of the programme will also be discussed and agreed to at this time.

44. The first RCF will be subject to a triennial review, which will take place during the third year of operation (i.e., 1999). All regional programmes will be evaluated upon their completion. The issues to be addressed as well as the timing will be determined by the Programme Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) in consultation with the RBAP and the Evaluation Office. Selected regional programmes will also be subject to ex post facto evaluations in an attempt to study the longer term effects of UNDP support.

45. The triennial review will examine the validity of the RCF, and endorse or recommend shifts in priorities and strategies as required. The monitoring system, as described above, will yield the necessary reports and analyses for submission to the PMOC and for the triennial review in 1999.

IV. EXECUTIVE BOARD ACTION

46. The Executive Board may wish to:

Approve the implementation strategy for the first regional cooperation framework (1997-2001) as contained in document DP/1998/8.

Annex

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND ALLOCATION TARGET TABLE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (1997-2001)

(In thousands of United States dollars)

Regional cooperation framework programme areas	Resource allocation	
	Core	Non-core
1. Human development and equity	31 125	1 954 (bilateral donors)
2. Environment and natural resource management	16 574	6 592 (GEF[$700], bilateral donors [5 892])
3. Enabling economic environment and public policy	36 401	1 900 (bilateral donors)
4. Others	9 316	
TOTAL	93 416	10 446

Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environmental Facility.